



Gerardo Nigenda, Primer Patio CFAB (Centro Fotográfico Álvarez Bravo)

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INTERVIEW

Mexico: La mirada invisible



After almost two-year of travel throughout Mexico, the group exhibition **La mirada invisible** (The Invisible Eye) now comes to the city of Santiago de Querétaro. What makes this event stand out is that each of the fifteen photographers featured in the show is blind.

It was thanks to the determination of the collective ArteSano Buró Cultural that the exhibition is making a final stop in Querétaro. The collective develops cultural strategies for healing and personal development, such as holding photography workshops for blind people. Le Journal de la Photographie spoke with its director, **Miguel Ángel Herrera**.

Céline Chevallier: What place does blind photography have in the larger world of photography?

Miguel Ángel Herrera: People often think that blind people cannot take pictures, as if the ability to produce images was determined by how well your eyes work. It's like [blind Cuban artist] Eladio Reyes has said, "The word 'image' doesn't come from seeing, but from imagination." Photographs taken by blind people enrich the medium because they involve other senses in the process: hearing, taste, touch, smell.

Blind photography has been around for over 20 years. There's the Franco-Lithuanian photographer and critic Evgen Bavča and, in Mexico, Gerardo Nigenda was a pioneer in the field. He died in 2010, but his legacy continues to inspire our work at the ArteSano Buró Cultural. The critic Benjamín Mayer has also drawn attention to the theme of "disability."

CC: How has ArteSano Buró Cultural worked with photography?

MAH: Four years ago we had the idea for a project about cameras, and then blindness came to us. In mid-2012, we held our first photography workshop in our city, Santiago de Querétaro.

Meanwhile, we asked that La Mirada Invisible make a stop here in Querétaro. This magnificent exhibition has taught us so much about the subject.

In a few weeks, we will hold a new series of photography workshops, and an exhibition of medium-format pictures taken by local blind photographers will be on display in the city's public spaces.

CC: What have you learned about the relationship between the blind and photography?

MAH: There are so many possibilities. Some of our students say that the camera serves as another pair of eyes to help them express what they see. Blind photography is an opportunity to communicate in a way that was never before accessible. It shows that it is possible to see without eyes. "Blind photographer" sounds like an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms, but it is also a provocative metaphor that encourages us to question the idea that an artist can be limited by the conditions of his or her life.

La Mirada Invisible

Until March 1st, 2013

Musée d'art de Querétaro

Allende 14 sur, Centro Historico

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Mexico

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